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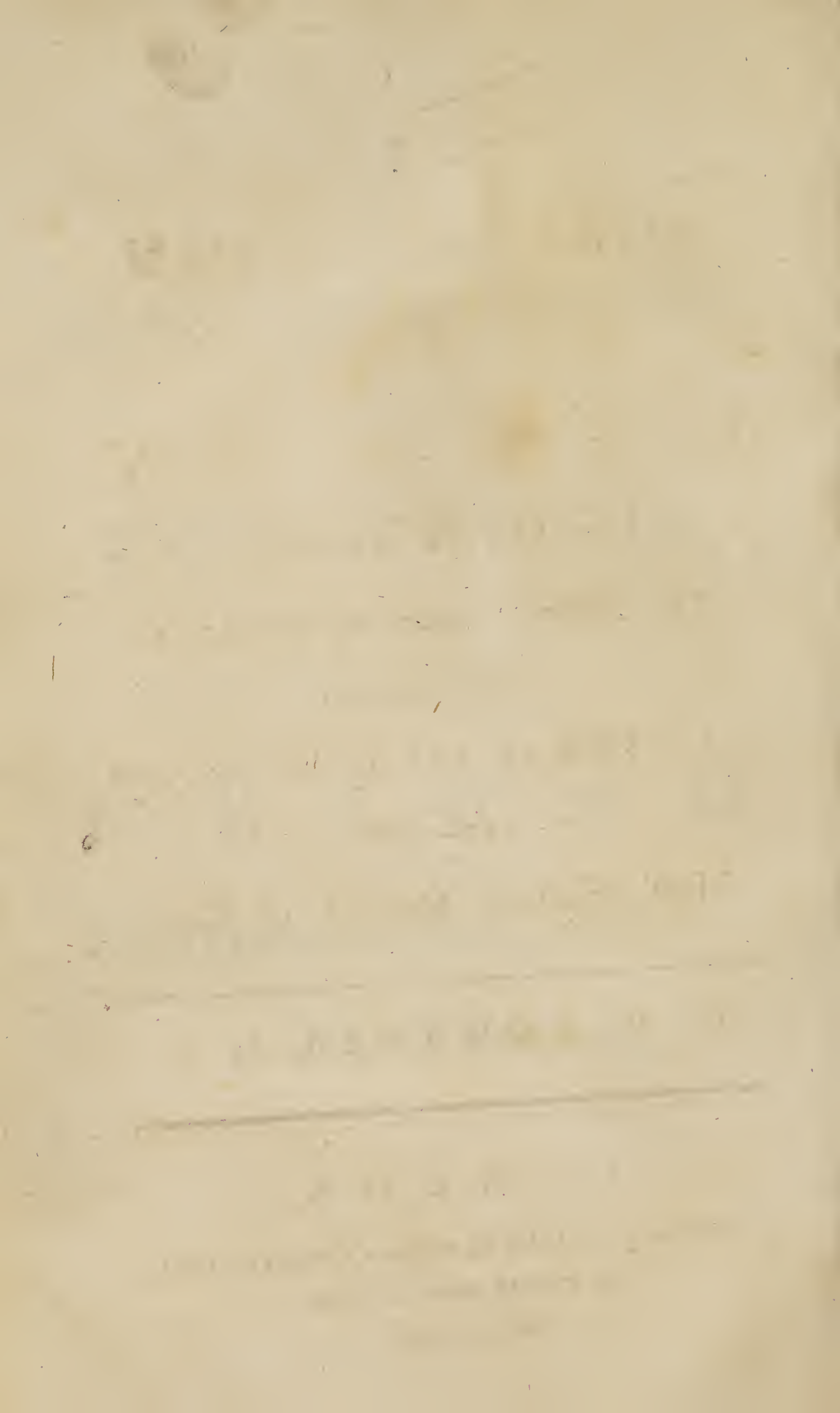
DISSERTATION

ON THE

DROPSY.



[Price ONE SHILLING.]



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DISSERTATION  
*P* ON THE *Lynn*  
D R O P S Y.

DISTINGUISHING  
The different Species of DROPSIES,  
THE VARIOUS  
CAUSES OF THE DISORDER,  
AND THE  
Most effectual Method of Cure.

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By W. LOWTHER, M. D.

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*Samuel Chetels*  
L O N D O N :

Printed for J. COOKE, at SHAKESPEARE'S HEAD,  
in PATER-NOSTER ROW.

MDCCLXXI.



THE HISTORY OF THE  
ROYAL SOCIETY OF MEDICINE

AND OF THE  
ROYAL SOCIETY OF PHYSICS

FROM THE  
FIFTEENTH TO THE NINETEENTH CENTURY

BY  
J. H. WELLCOME

IN TWO VOLUMES

VOLUME I

THE  
FIFTEENTH CENTURY

LONDON:  
PRINTED BY THE SOCIETY'S PRINTERS

AND SOLD BY THE SOCIETY'S BOOKSELLERS

AT THE SOCIETY'S OFFICE, 1, WILKINSON STREET, LONDON, E.C. 4

1901

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A

DISSERTATION

ON THE

D R O P S Y.

 HIS disorder may be justly defined an extravasation or effusion of the aqueous serum or thinner part of the blood in any of the cavities of the body ; where stagnating, for want of resorption and intermixture with the blood and other circulating humors, is the essential cause and origin of a dropsy. It is generally distinguished into different species and names, from the

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particular part affected by the watery effusion, as the Hydrocephalus, or dropfy of the head in its integuments and cavity; dropfy of the Thorax or breast; dropfy of the ovarium; dropfy of the testicles; dropfy of the glands; Tympany, commonly called dry dropfy, from a confined elastic air preternaturally distending the stomach and intestinal tube; Leucophlegmatia, Anasarca, or collection of water and inspissated serum lodged in the cellular membrane in the interstices of the muscles; and Ascites, from its resemblance to a leathern bottle, when the region and cavity of the Abdomen is remarkably swelled, and the containing parts distended from an accumulation of the collected water.

The two last species of the dropfy, Leucophlegmatia and Ascites, being the most frequent and incident to grown people, and pronounced by all the Faculty most inveterate dangerous disorders, I shall chiefly confine this short treatise in discussing the various causes, and most effectual



tual method of curing, by powerful diuretics, the afflicted with these desperate complaints: but as a Tympany is often mistaken, from some resemblance to an Ascites, for the same disorder, I shall subjoin a short chapter on that subject, to distinguish and ascertain, by various signs and symptoms, their difference from each other.

## Leucophlegmatia.

THE Leucophlegmatia is an effusion of watery lymph through the whole pinguous habit, lodged in the cellular membrane incumbent on the muscles and all their intestines. When the disorder is recent in an incipient state, the extravasated lymph is inspissated from a mixture of mucus and phlegm, which, in the progress of the disease, is dissolved into an aqueous tenuity, constituting a true Anasarca. It is easy to conceive, from the fabric of the adipose membrane dispersed through all parts of the muscles and viscera constitut-

ing partly their substance, that constitutions of a phlegmatic temperament superabounding with water, are always liable to be attacked with this disorder. From the lateral minute branches of the sanguiferous arteries is secreted, in a sound state of body, a fatty oil which is deposited in the cells of this membrane, and by similar branches of the veins, being resorbed, is again returned to the circulating blood. When too much water abounds in the habit, it is easily secreted in the cells of this membrane, and, if not resorbed in proportion by the veins, it will extend the cellular tunic, and hence occasion a tumefaction of the whole body.

This disorder denotes such disposition of body as depraves the nourishment throughout the whole habit; and thus vitiated, is specifically distinguished by proper signs and symptoms. In the beginning the body is soft, frigid, pastaceous, pallid, and squalid, from the mucous lentor of the blood; at length turgid, diffused, and distended into an aquosity occupying the whole habit; it



it generally makes its first appearance and effort in a puffy swelling of the feet, legs, and thighs, from the water descending, when walking or in an erect position, by its gravity, to the inferior limbs; and, before the disorder has taken deep root in the habit, the tumors will vanish in the night by the discutient heat of the covering, and the horizontal situation in bed. As the circulation is languid, and the tumid parts have lost their tone and elasticity, if you press them with the finger, the vestige of the impression will remain for some space of time before the vessels are restored and replete: the face and complexion, from florid, degenerates into pale, wan, livid, greenish-yellow, with a dismal aspect: the body is torpid, languid, inert, sometimes defecated with ichorous pustules or scales, as in a scurvy, with spontaneous lassitude, incapable of bearing labour, fatigue, or even moderate exercise, which is always essential to the recovery of the patient: when walking the feet joggle, are weak and unsteady, especially in ascending steep places: the  
breathing



breathing is short and difficult, increasing in quickness upon the least motion, or taking food: there is frequently a strong pulsation of the jugular arteries, with a palpitation of the heart: the belly feels to the touch hard and inflated, especially when costive, with dejection of crude excrements often mixed with blood: the appetite is inert, vague, prostrate, loathing of food, bad concoction of the aliment, and gravitative swelling of the stomach: the urine is pale and watery, sometimes turbid without deposition of sediment: the skin is dry without sweat or moisture: the head is obtuse, heavy with pulsation and pungent pain: sometimes a slow continual fever is a concomitant of the disorder, rendering the pulse frequent, fluttering, low and unequal. In fine, all the animal functions languish, the patients become morose, sorrowful and dejected: in women there is a suppression of the menstrual discharge, suffocations of the womb, with faintings and inexpressible anxiety about the præcordia. This state of the dropical habit

per-

perseveres sometimes a whole year or longer, and, by proper management, the disorder might be more easily eradicated, than when it terminates in an Ascites, by a lodgment of the waters in the cavity of the belly.

The causes of the disorder, and of the recited effects, being strictly enquired into, and well understood, will greatly conduce to the most rational method of cure: the proximate cause is a depraved nutrition, with a superabundance of phlegm and water in the habit, to which various other causes and incidents concur: it may arise from viscid farinaceous unfermented food; immoderate use of spirituous liquors; confinement to lucubration and study; too much indulgence in rest; vigilancy with anxiety; residence in fens, marshes, lakes; from the passions of the mind, struck with fear, or unexpected terror; suppression of urine; vitiated stomach; obstructions of the viscera; long, continual fevers; dry asthma; menses and hæmorrhoids suppressed; diarrhœa; dysentery; fluor albus; and every immo-



immoderate flux. Viscid indigestible food will be productive of a Leucophlegmatia, in consequence of a debility of the viscera and digestive organs incapable of subduing the crassitude and tenacity of the particles, so as to render them fit for nutrition and circulation : such are farinaceous unfermented food, austere immature fruits, from which will arise a pituitous lentor in the first passages vitiating the chyle, and conveyed to the blood, will impregnate it with these terrestrial particles, infect it by degrees, and render it more unfit for intestine motion and circulation ; for as the particles of the blood are not sufficiently comminuted for the lymphatic ducts, the necessary excretions, secretions, and perspiration, will be thereby impeded, and the mucous matter will be forced to a lodgment in the cells of the adipose membrane, and other cavities, with tumefaction of the whole habit.

Residence in marshy, fenny places, produces the same bad effects ; a moist, gross, impure

impure air greatly relaxes the habit, compresses the sudorific vessels, and by suppressing the insensible transpiration, prevents an elimination of the perspirable matter, which, being long retained, is converted into a mucosity, phlegm, or ichor, generating a leucophlegmatia. The same water being daily in use in admixture of food and drink will greatly contribute to the same purpose: being impregnated with many terrestrial particles, it cannot be easily subdued to a good concoction, the mass of blood is replete with them, and, distending the vessels, destroys the equilibrium and proportion between the solids and fluids; and from this distension of the solids, their elastic tone is impaired, consequently the circulation is retarded; and a mucous lentor, infecting the blood, may soon establish the disorder.

Immoderate rest or watching may induce the same complaints. A person composed to comfortable sleep in bed, perspires more freely than when awake, or hurried on business,



fineness, with great anxiety; thus the sleep being less than usual, the exhalation of the perspirable matter is greatly diminished, and crudities increasing in the humours, will occasion a lentor of the blood, stagnation in the lympheducts, and heaviness in phlegmatic bodies: for by exercise and motion the muscles are variously contracted, and propelling the contained blood with greater impetus, the circulation will be accelerated by attrition and the comminution of its particles; but by long rest and want of muscular motion, the body becomes torpid, the circulation languishes, and the crassitude of the blood increasing, produces a cachectical habit. When long vigilancy is joined with violent motions of the body the animal spirits are wasted, the thinner part of the blood is dissipated, and the remainder inspissated with proneness to stagnation.

Sadness and unexpected terror greatly affect the constitution, and frequently produce sudden desperate changes in the crasis of the blood. In those affections of the  
mind,



mind, the respiration being light and low, the heavier particles are not eliminated from the pulmonary system; the surface of the body contracting, impedes the perspiration, the pulse is diminished, circulation languid, and produce immediate coagulation of the blood: besides, those who indulge sorrow, generally seek solitude and retirement, which for want of exercise injure all the animal and vital functions; and, the tone of the vessels being impaired, produces heaviness and torpor of body, with a tendency to a dropy, or consumption, according to the peculiarity of the constitution susceptible of the impression.

Suppression of the usual evacuations, as menstrual discharge, Lochia, Hæmorrhoids, &c. may give rise to the same complaints. Suppose the monthly discharge of the catamenia to be one or two pounds, which, not being excreted as usual, produces a plethora, with too great a fullness of the sanguiferous vessels; and from their elastic

tone being impaired, prevents the attrition and comminution of the particles of blood, generally producing an Anasarca, and subsequent Ascites.

This disorder may take its origin from various other diseases. In slow continual fevers, the thinner part of the blood being dissipated, by a wrong administration of sudorific medicines, will occasion an imperfect crasis and lentor of the blood, retarding the circulation in the extreme minute vessels, which will be thereby distended, and the smaller branches of the resorbent veins not able to evacuate themselves, a dropsey must be the consequence from the continual exhalation of the arteries into the cavities. The same may arise from a dry convulsive asthma, especially when the straitness of the thorax and constriction of the lungs deny a sufficient ingress of air to their expansion; hence there will be too great an impletion and distension of the veins, transmitting the viscid blood with difficulty, which  
accu-



accumulating in them, and successively increasing, occasions an infarction and amplification of the capillary vessels, so that the serum and thinner part of the blood being secreted in too great a quantity, it must descend to the inferior limbs, producing swellings and all other bad consequences. In the commencement of this complaint; exercise on horseback and a pure air should not be neglected. When the stomach is disordered, it generally vitiates the chyle, which not being sufficiently comminuted, expressed and divided, by entering the mass of blood, renders it gross, viscid, and unfit for nutrition; and begets a strong tendency to a dropsy.

In this disorder the body suffers greatly in change of colour, and consistence. Colour depending upon the transparency of the blood in the external capillaries, which being vitiated from a mucous lentor, the red globules are few and suppressed, and coming to the capillaries frigid with very little

little attrition, it cannot excite a vivid transparency or florid complexion, but degenerates into a livid paleness; and, by admixture of noxious particles, becomes yellowish, dusky and tawney: the body swelling from the languor of circulation, and deposition of mucus in the cellular membrane, occasions a preternatural distension of all the vessels, and by that means the vestige of any impression remains for some space of time.

The bad effects of the disease arise from a corrupt viscid state of the blood retarding the circulation, and stagnating in places most remote from the heart; the inferior parts become tumid and puffy, successively increasing, invades the legs, thighs, and abdomen; causing an Ascites from the lodgment of water in the cavity of the belly. The patients complain of weakness from a flaccid state of the muscles, and want of turgescence in the habit; and few animal spirits being secreted to invigorate the constitution, make them prone to lassitude, feeling



feeling fatigue and uneasiness on the least motion, especially in ascending steep places; being then obliged to raise the whole weight of the body perpendicularly. Transpiration being suppressed from the external cold and languid circulation, and the excretory vessels compressed in their intertexture from a redundancy of aqueous humors, produces a sensation of cold and shivering.

Pains of the head frequently accede in the Leucophlegmatia. There being innumerable branches of arteries extended to the dura and pia mater, it is very obvious that from a viscid state of the blood, there will be an impediment of circulation in the veins, causing a compression of the vessels; and the subsequent blood, meeting resistance, will excite a pulsatory sensation, which, from the situation of the temporal arteries, will be most conspicuous in them. The veins not transmitting the blood with equable motion, causes a greater distension of the arteries, forces them into more frequent



quent contractions; and hence an increase of pulsation with recession of pain.

The appetite fails and nourishment is depraved from a weakness of the organs of digestion and diminution of their peristaltic motion, which prevents the proper attrition and comminution of the food in the alimentary canal: besides, there being a lentor of the blood, the gastric humour of the stomach, a principal menstruum of digestion is thereby infected, and its internal vessels and sides, lined with a viscid matter, prevents their touching accurately; and hence the sense of hunger fails, with loathing, gravitation, and bad concoction of the aliment. The same viscid state of the blood, causing obstructions in the capillaries of the urinary ducts, there will be an intumescence, compression, and straitness of passage in the excretory vessels; and too great a quantity of urine being retained, will create heaviness and pain in the region of the loins. Hence also will arise a sup-  
pression

pression of the menstrual discharge from similar obstructions in the uterine vessels. A slow fever is frequently attendant on this disease from obstructions of the capillaries on the surface; which stopping perspiration and excretion, and provoking the heart to more frequent contractions, to conquer the resistance, occasions a quicker pulse than usual with a fever: the pulse is frequent, small, fluttering, and unequal.

Various and sudden changes of the air may produce a leucophlegmatic habit. A temperate, serene, and pure air is essentially necessary to the preservation of life and health; so from its intemperature many disorders may arise. There is something latent and occult in this body, constantly affecting our constitutions, which cannot be accounted for from its gravity, or elasticity; nor attributed to any sensible quality within our comprehensions. When therefore the body and its functions are vitiated, and no primary cause of the disorder appears, it may be attributed to the



insalubrity of the air, which should, in such a case, be changed by removal to another climate. A warm, dry, and temperate air is most friendly to constitutions of a leucophlegmatic disposition : but a moist, damp, gross air is pernicious ; by conveying and insinuating the watery particles into the habit, it induces a laxity and inertness of the solids, congestion and expansion of the fluids ; and, as in pituitous constitutions the stamina are less compact and elastic, the body will soon fall into anasarcaous swellings, and at length terminate in an ascites.

The principal intention of cure in a recent Leucophlegmatia, is to restore the viscid humours to a natural fluidity, and render them fit for circulation, which is greatly helped by a proper regimen and due use of the non-naturals. The air should be dry ; the drink not much, but of a generous nature ; the aliment exsiccating and nourishing, as biscuit or bread well fermented ; the flesh-meats should be roasted, and of the volatile kind,

kind, or of animals exercised in running, such as hares, rabbits, kids, venison, &c. restraining from too much drink and aqueous food ; frequent exercise ; friction ; residence in pure air, and variety of amusements.

The medicines best appropriated to this disordered state of the body should be such as are endued with a discutient stimulating quality, intermixed occasionally with cardiacs, corroborants, subastringents, and evacuants. The principal medicines of this class in use are the following: sapo-venet: gum-ammon: mastich, assafoetida, benzoin, galban: opoponax. myrrh, sagapen: aloes, castor; rad. jalap: rhabarb: scammony, raphan: rustican: gentian: aristoloch: zedoar: imperator: angelic: cantrayer: galang: iridis, pyrethri, herb: absinth: centaur-minor: rorismarin: artemis: thymi, serpilli, mari syriaci, lavendul: cochlear: hyssop: marjoram: rutæ: sabinae, salviae, femina: absinth: foenicul: tanacet: fantonici, anis: carui: cardam: coriand: sinap: foenugreci, nasturt: dauci: baccar: juniper: laur: enul: campan: bardana:



parier: brav: vencetoxic: scill: &c. to which may be added nutmegs, mace, cinnamon, pepper, with stimulating aromatic and cephalic oils: but great prudence and caution is necessary in the exhibition of those stimulants, for fear of accelerating too suddenly the circulation dissolving the humors, and forcing them to a deposition in the abdominal cavity, which may quickly produce an Ascites.

## Ascites.

THIS disorder denotes a collection of water or serous humors in the cavity of the abdomen, passing frequently into the scrotum. The pathognomonic signs of an Ascites are intumescence of the inferior limbs, swelling, distension, and heaviness of the belly, with noise of water fluctuating in the cavity. In general, the tumor begins in the feet, increasing and ascending gradually to the legs, thighs, and belly, where the watery humors deposited in its cavity will, upon concussion



concussion or stroke, produce a noise and perceptible fluctuation. The waters passing into the scrotum occasion its swelling sometimes to an enormous size, with incurvature of the penis. The respiration is difficult, breathing short and quick, and at length so oppressive, that the patients cannot respire but in an erect posture, or head inclined to the breast, with a perpetual cough and endeavours to excrete; the appetite is languid, with a loathing of food; an uncommon and continual drought is the constant companion of this disorder; the urine is passed in small quantities, which at first is of an aqueous tenuity, but by degrees becomes turbid and red; there is frequently a constipation of the belly, with crude dejections mixed with blood; the inquiline humors corrupted from the stagnant waters, with obstructions in the capillary vessels, produce a fever, and a frequent, low, hard, and tense pulse; when the disease proves inveterate and unyielding to remedy, the inferior parts become more tumid, whilst the  
superior

superior parts are observed to be totally emaciated with a livid discoloration of the skin; the sleep is not refreshing to the constitution, the patient generally awaking uneasy and disturbed, with a greater tumefaction of the face and hands, and proneness to slumber, wishing from death a relief of their misery.

The causes of the Dropsy, and its various effects, are sufficiently recited and canvassed in the last chapter, giving a full description of its rise, and all the necessary cautions to prevent its progress: however, for the sake of my readers and patients, afflicted with this desperate disease, I shall add a few pages more in discussing the theory, and illustrating the subject, I hope, to their satisfaction.

It has been observed that in the Leucophlegmatia there are great obstructions in the minute venous vessels, which retard the return of the blood to the heart; and, in proportion



proportion to the resistance, the pressure will be augmented in the capillary vessels, forcing the smaller branches of the arteries to deposite the lymph, instead of oils, in the cellular membrane.

When the cells of the adipose membrane are replete with this viscid lymph, a resistance will arise in the vessels of absorption, especially in the more remote parts from the heart, and will occasion first a tumefaction of the inferior limbs, gradually ascending to all the adipose parts of the abdomen, which being thus charged with great weight of water, the pressure will be increased on the peritoneum and its vessels, forcing a transudation of vapours through the exhaling arteries in the cavity of the abdomen. In the same manner Dropsies in the other cavities are to be explained.

Neither is the above the sole cause of an Ascites, as internal tumors, exulcerations, and viscosities may have the same effect.



effect. Suppose the liver obstructed from tumors, or indurated by a scirrhus, it will impede the free transit of the blood in the branches of the vena porta and cava, and the obstacle increasing from an accession of more blood, there will be a greater accumulation and pressure in the capillary and excretory vessels, forcing a transudation of the lymph and matter through the pores of its tunic, and causing a lodgment of it in the cavity of the abdomen. As the peritoneum is extended to all the abdominal viscera, covering and strengthening them with a membranaceous tunic, it is very conceivable, that similar obstructions or congestions in any of the viscera may terminate in a Dropsy, and indeed of the most dangerous and malignant nature, from a putrid liquefaction of the internal parts in this cavity, where the most powerful medicines can scarcely reach with sufficient efficacy to heal and restore them to their due tone.

When the abdomen is greatly distended from the excretion and lodgment of waters  
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in its cavity, it impedes the free descent of the diaphragm in respiration, and occasions difficulty of breathing; nor can they sleep or lie down horizontally, as in that position the collected waters and viscera press more forcibly in preventing the descent of the diaphragm, and, threatening a total suppression of breathing, oblige them to seek an erect posture, that the waters and viscera may subside to the inferior parts. When there is any internal inflammation and fever, the thirst is greatly increased; even without a fever there will be a constant thirst; for as the excretion of lymph in the cavity is augmented the other excretions will be diminished in the salival glands, urine, insensible transpiration, and sweats; and hence the fauces will become acid and dry with great thirst, because the lymph is not conveyed to the glands in sufficient quantity, from having a more open free passage and absorption into the cavity of the abdomen.



The too great indulgence and abuse in debauching with strong spirituous liquors, will frequently generate a Dropsy. By their inordinate use the blood is stimulated, accelerated, its attrition increased, and natural excretions excited by stool, urine, perspiration, or sweats; and hence, from a long continuance and excess, the thinner and more subtle parts of the blood will be dissipated, the remaining humors incrassated, and the vessels, from the daily impetus and stimulus excited by strong liquors, will be too frequently amplified into preternatural distensions, with loss of tone, contremescence of the stomach and limbs, and a total relaxation of the habit; wherefore the more subtle parts being thus expelled, and the excretory vessels, having lost their tone and elasticity, are incapable of restitution and performing the office of attrition, the blood becomes viscid and prone to stagnation, productive of a dropsy: and what is most deplorable, almost an extinction of all the external functions!



- “ Immodici sensus perturbat copia Bacchi,  
 “ Inde quis enumerat quot mala proveniant?  
 “ Corporis exhaurit succos, animique vigorem  
 “ Opprimit, ingenium strangulat atque negat.”

EOBAN.

As the cause of a dropfy depends on many concurring incidents, the prognostic is sometimes very dubious and undeterminable, especially when the disorder arises from scirrhoties or exulcerations of the internal viscera: but when it proceeds only from a depraved state of the circulating humors, the consequence is not dreadful, if the strength and constitution of the patient will bear up with vigour, and cooperate with the power of medicine in the cure.

The favourable symptoms indicating a speedy recovery are soundness of the viscera; easy respiration, without cough, drought, or dryness of the tongue; the appetite good without uneasiness after meals; the belly soft, easily moved on taking of medicines, and the excrements of a proper consistence,

without crudities or admixture of blood ; a change of urine upon alteration of medicine or food ; free from pain ; bearing exercise without reluctance and fatigue, or too great proneness to lassitude, dejection, solitude, and rest. The contrary to all these favourable symptoms, prognosticate greater danger.

The curative indications in the Anasarca and Ascites are, to restore the stagnant viscid lymph and humors to their natural fluidity, and return them to the circulation ; to evacuate the redundant juices and extravasated lymph from the cavities ; to strengthen the relaxed fibres and vessels, so that, by restitution to tone, elasticity and contraction, they may be able to accelerate the circulation, and promote all the necessary secretions ; and to invigorate the constitution by corroborating medicines, to prevent a relapse.

The greatest adjuvant to medicine in the cure of the Anasarca and Ascites is  
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in promoting the exercise of the body: by muscular motion the venous blood will be accelerated to the heart, and the circulation, by force of exercise, may be increased at will; for the muscles swelling and contracting in labour and motion, press the cellular membrane and parts interposed, exciting an attrition of the stagnant serum, and by forcing a resorption, prepares it for excretion and elimination by sweats, urine, stool, &c.

When the watery humors are increased in the habit, and extravasated in the cavity of the Abdomen, various methods of cure have been devised to evacuate the effused waters. Strong vomits, purgatives, sudorifics, opiates, and mercurials, are successively administered in hope of attenuating the viscid humors, and prepare them for expulsion by the urinary passage, or dissipate them by the other emittories of the body. But when the patients are not very soon relieved by this method of cure, the continuance



tinuance of it, exciting intolerable convulsions, disturbance, and heat in the body; will render the disorder inveterate with most pernicious symptoms: the thirst will be increased, the habit more relaxed with greater effusion of water in the cavities, and, what should be principally attended to in this and all disorders, preservation of tone in the organs of digestion, will, by obstinate perseverance in this method, be totally debilitated and incapable of performing the office of digestion, and supplying a good chyle for nutrition; and hence the vital functions vitiated and failing will speedily terminate the tragic scene in death!

Diuretics are allowed, by the most eminent physicians, to be the safest and most efficacious medicines that can be exhibited in the cure of a dropsy: they do not disturb the constitution much, nor give such violent shocks as is generally experienced in the continual use of strong vomits and purgatives; which are always destructive in hysterical

sterical and delicate habits : the patients are not debilitated by the continuance of them, and if properly selected and adapted to the constitution and nature of the disorder, there is more likelihood of success from diuretics than any other class of medicines. For the redundant humors and extraneous noxious particles confused with the mass of blood, will be more easily secreted by the urinal tubes than any other in the habit. These ducts, from their situation, in greater warmth, are rendered more yielding, more potent, and the peccant matter more fluid and attenuated for expulsion. Medicaments of this class properly suited to the nature of these complaints, should be of a deobstruent quality, capable of dissolving the viscid tenacity of the humors, and by removing the obstructions of the secretory ducts of the kidneys, render them fit for performing their functions, in eliminating the serum and recrementitious particles of the blood by the urinary passage.



Of this kind there is a great variety mentioned and recommended by different authors: such are alkaline lixivial salts, and various preparations of them; salts of nitre, ammoniac, borax, polychrest, regenerated tartar, vitriolated tartar, stibiated tartar, alum; soap, turpentine, oil of juniper, juices of oranges, lemons, citrons, garlic, onions, squills, with rhenish and other diuretic wines; tinctures of tartar, cantharides, antimony, quicklime, with innumerable other remedies compounded from the roots, leaves, flowers, and berries of various vegetables, many of which are mentioned in the conclusion of the last chapter. And indeed many of the recited medicines prove often useful and salutary in a recent state of the disorder, if administered in due season, and by a skilful hand, who understands conducting the disease in every stage of its progress. But the man of science and knowledge in physic is seldom called upon in this or any other disorder, until the last extremity, until every matron and antiquated nurse have



have tried all their vain efforts, when imminent danger and fear of censure, exciting humiliation, oblige them to seek refuge and relief in the superior abilities of some physician, to rectify their misconduct, and extricate them from difficulty; but such is the force of vulgar credulity, that this abuse and evil is more intolerable and difficult of correction and cure than the complaints under consideration.

However, I must allow that some of the most eminent of the faculty have failed of success in the cure of the dropfy; and hence observing the insufficiency of the present mode of administration in this disease, have spent a long time in contemplating the nature of the different species of dropfies, and most probable means of relieving the afflicted with these desperate complaints, which, from experiment and observation, finding to be obtainable from diuretic medicines preferably to any other class, has engaged a great part of my attention and time for

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years,

years, in discovering and compounding, by various processes, the most powerful diuretics, in order to give them their desired effect, without disturbance to the constitution, in evacuating the stagnant waters from the cavities by the urinary passage, and have the pleasure at last to find my endeavours crowned with success.

I can assert with confidence, from long experience, and various incontestable trials in the most desperate state of the dropsy, that the Diuretic Drops in my possession greatly excel any other medicine in the present practice; and am so fully convinced of their virtue, power and efficacy, in eradicating this disorder, that I shall undertake the cure without any deposit, premium, or demand on the patients, until, on trial, they have full conviction of the good effects of the medicine in perfecting the cure, and establishing their health. An honest procedure shall justify my conduct to the public; and the afflicted with this disorder, honoring



honoring me with their confidence, will find in a few days such benefit from the medicine, as, in fact, will support the truth of my assertion: nor have I any doubt of giving general satisfaction to those who may call upon me for information; or of completing the cure in the space of one month.

It has been remarked, that various dangerous symptoms are concomitant on the disorder; as difficult respiration threatening suffocation, tubercles of the lungs, and polypose concretion of the heart, depraved appetite, indigestion, &c. which should be strictly attended to, for fear of their constituting a secondary disease more pernicious than the primary. And as it will be necessary, after dissipation of the waters, to strengthen the habit, and prevent a relapse by stomatic corroborating medicines, would advise the patients under cure to have recourse to me, in calling on me frequently, or corresponding during their continuance of the medicine; when they may be assured  
of

of having proper directions for regimen and diet, and every adjuvant in physic administered that may be necessary to subdue the direct symptoms, and totally eradicate the disorder.

## Tympany

IS a tumor of the abdomen, fixed, constant, equal, hard, resistant, arising from rarefied vapors, and confined air in the stomach and intestinal tube, which occasions a rumbling and murmuring noise, resounding like a drum on percussion. From this definition, it is apparent that the Tympany is essentially different from an ascites, as will appear more evident from the following distinguishing signs.

The tumor and distension of the body is less than in an ascites; the abdomen is more compressed to the sides, and anteriorly towards the navel, more prominent; there is less sense of gravity and weight of body than  
in



in an Ascites, from the ponderosity of accumulated waters in the cavity ; on percussion it resounds with an obtuse sound, like an unbraced drum, without perceptible fluctuation of water ; the tumor does not vary on changing situation of body ; the vestige of impression made by the finger does not remain for any space of time ; the respiration is more free, they lye down with greater ease, and the pulse is fuller and harder than in ascitical patients, whose pulse is generally small and languid : in the Tympany there is less intumescence of the feet, greater constipation of the belly, more frequent eructations and belchings of wind, which sometimes give such relief, that the patients do not feel sense of pain, or symptoms of disorder ; they bear fatigue and exercise with more chearfulness, nor is there such proneness to lassitude, dejection, and rest.

The belly is compressed at the sides, and ascends anteriorly, because the sides of the abdomen being firmly supported by three very strong muscles, will resist more forcibly

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bly the pressure of air in the intestinal tube, than when the water is extravasated in the cavity, which, from its ponderosity, fluctuation, and relaxation of the fibres of the muscles, will oblige them to yield to a greater expansion at the sides: they respire more freely, and feel less anxiety in a decumbent posture, because the air being light yields more easily to the descending diaphragm in inspiration, neither pressing on it forcibly in sleep, is there that danger of suffocation, anxiety of the præcordia, or sense of gravity and oppression as in the ascites: the body is sometimes totally emaciated from a defect of good chyle; for as the alimentary canal, by a preternatural distension, has lost its contractile power, there is not a sufficient attrition and comminution of the aliment to form it into chyle fit for nutrition; beside, the orifices of the lacteals, in great distension, are so much affected, that they do not transmit a sufficient quantity for the support of the blood.



The cure of a Tympany requires restoration of the contractile power of the intestines; and diminution of the rarified air in their cavity, which is obtained by stimulant, aromatic, and astringent medicines, irritating the first passages to more powerful contractions, and free expulsion of the rarefied vapors and indurated fæces, which frequently excite intolerable pains in the region of the loins. Such are origany, pennyroyal, rue, calamint, masterwort, elecampane, cinnamon, mace, nutmegs, cloves, ginger, yellow-saunders, aloes, peruvian-bark, winter's bark, citrons, pomgranates, wall pepper, arum, seeds of fennel, cummin, &c. with many others of the same class, which may be, occasionally, exhibited with stimulating purgatives, and applied in clysters, fomentations, and cataplasms, to the region of the abdomen. To expedite the cure, exercise should be instituted, and every kind of flatulent food, generative of wind, to be avoided.

Having

Having now fulfilled my promise, to the best of my ability, in describing the history of the disorder, and pointing out the distinguishing signs of each species, with a general method of cure in the Dropsy, am obliged to conclude this treatise, for fear of tiring and disgusting my readers by too great prolixity in unnecessary animadversions and comments; and hope, from their benevolence and candour, to merit some share of applause and approbation for my endeavours, requesting their indulgence and excuse of any trifling inaccuracies that may occur in discussing this subject.

*Diversis diversa placent, quod spreveret unus  
Alter amat, cunctis nemo placere potest.*

Patients in London, incapable of calling at Dr. LOWTHER's house in Hatton Garden, will be visited by him on notice given; and all letters from the country, post paid, answered with punctuality and precision.

F I N I S.











